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EXTERNAL - POLITICAL

1. US-Soviet Relations. The Soviet press has been following the line that an improvement in East-West relations, including relations with the US, is still possible owing to what it claims to be persistent Soviet efforts to achieve this, and that the threat of war and failure to settle controversial questions arises only because American ruling circles are following a bent to keep the international situation unsettled and intense.

The current tone was set by Khrushchev's May 6 speech in Yerevan, in which he said the Soviet Union is preparing seriously for forthcoming disarmament negotiations and would strive for a peaceful settlement in Laos.

However, commenting on discussion by public figures of whether the US should send its own forces to places like Laos, South Vietnam, and Cuba, Pravda asked how can one reconcile the assertions of American leaders that they wish to relax tensions when public figures, "not far from the White House," are publicly debating the efficacy of direct military intervention, which countries it would be expedient to use as battlefields in the struggle against communism, and whether intervention should be unilateral or carried out in a collective guise.

Although direct criticism of the President was moderated and carried out largely by the publication of textual material from US press commentary analyzing the problems before the US critically in the aftermath of the Cuban invasion, the net impression was not entirely negative. Pravda published an interview by Cyrus Eaton with the Kansas City Star in which he said that he still believes in Kennedy and thinks the "Cuban defeat" has taught him much. Since the Soviet public has been led to believe that Eaton is a true advocate of peaceful coexistence, his remarks would be likely to strike the broad Soviet public as encouraging for the prospect of improvement in East-West relations. In this case the real villians of the picture are portrayed as "cold warriors" in the State Department, CIA, and Pentagon, as well as representatives of "the monopolists."

Comment on Shepard's sub-orbital space flight in Soviet press, radio, and TV coverage was small in volume and in low key. It stressed that Gagarin's flight was an incomparably greater scientific achievement. It also picked up Western press comment, as well as the President's press conference statement that the US is still behind in its space program. However, an article in Pravda by Academician Sedov gave a more generous and friendly evaluation of the feat. He said that the Shepard flight represents a significant achievement of American specialists and that Soviet scientists welcome their achievement and share the joy and satisfaction of the Americans on the subject. Sedov referred to the possibility of international cooperation in space research, but added that such cooperation will be successful only with the favorable development in international relations and a real solution of the disarmament program.

2. Laos. Reporting the arrival in Geneva of the Soviet delegation to the Geneva Conference on Laos, the Soviet press adopted the tone that there were good prospects for a peaceful settlement in Laos, thanks to the aid and support of the socialist camp headed by the USSR. It warned, however, that a peaceful settlement might be sabotaged by the proponents of the "big stick" policy who wish to utilize Southeast Asia as a continuous source of international tension. The press also struck an ominous note by periodically claiming that the Boun Oum-Phoumi government is procrastinating on cease-fire negotiations. It noted that although the belligerents announced a cease-fire some time ago, until now no agreement has been reached on the place to hold negotiations. It reported Pathet Lao claims that the Boun Oum-Phoumi forces are violating the cease-fire and threatened that such "provocations" cannot be endured endlessly.

3. NATO Oslo Meeting. The immediate Soviet press reaction to the NATO communique stressed disarmament and Berlin. Pravda (May 11) noted that the projected US-Soviet talks on disarmament were described in the communique as procedural. It commented that Secretary Rusk's reported assurances that the talks would not be substantive suggests that he saw his main task as showing that the US is not interested in serious consideration of disarmament, rather than giving hope of progress in this field. On Berlin, Pravda said that the communique reference to the December 1958 NATO statement (it did not give its substance) showed that NATO intends to prevent normalization of the situation in Europe. Red Star (May 11) cited Western press sources for the view that Rusk's statements on Berlin eliminated any basis for the belief that the new US administration would show greater readiness to negotiate on Berlin than its predecessor. The Secretary was said to have threatened the use of force if what was described as the abnormal Berlin situation were changed. Pravda made the point that several Oslo participants preferred to postpone consideration of NATO as a fourth atomic power, and gave this as the motivation for the US offer of five Polaris submarines, a step intended, it said, to increase tension in Europe. The paper also stated that the communique reference to the menace from the USSR in the scientific field indicated a vain desire to hinder the scientific achievements of the Socialist countries.

4. Middle East.

(a) Iran. The dismissal of the Iranian parliament and the formation of the Amini government were reported briefly and without comment in the Soviet press. Falsification of election returns was cited as the motive for the Shah's dismissal action. It was noted that three key ministers in the new government (foreign affairs, interior, and war) filled the same posts in the Sharif Imami government. Pravda (May 11) reported an interview given by Amini to Die Welt, in which the new premier is stated to have said that while the alliance with the West remained the keystone of Iranian foreign policy, Iran should maintain good-neighbor relations with the USSR and is against permitting "any US military bases" on Iranian territory.

(b) Turkey. Pravda (May 11) carried a brief report on a call made by Ambassador Ryzhov on Premier Gursel prior to departure on leave. Gursel was reported as having told newsmen after the meeting that Turkish friendship with the USSR was very good and would become still better. He was also reported to have asked Ryzhov to convey his congratulations to Khrushchev on the Gargarin space flight. It is rather unusual for the Soviet press to report a leave-taking call of this kind, and the tone of the report was noticeably positive, perhaps foreshadowing some new development in Soviet-Turkish relations, possibly concerning high-level visits.

(c) Iraq. Trud, the Soviet central trade union daily, on May 11 reported the recent arrest in Baghdad of Ali Shuker, chairman of the Iraqi general federation of trade unions and "one of the outstanding figures in the international labor movement." The report mentioned Shuker's record as a fighter against tyranny before the 1958 coup and his allegedly high reputation among Iraqi workers. Shuker's arrest, Trud continues, cannot fail to cause bewilderment among Soviet workers and trade unions which call on Kassem to intervene and release Shuker. Previously, Pravda (May 10) carried a brief report on the closing of the Iraqi national council of peace supporters on the grounds that there is no need for such a narrow organization, since the peace movement concerns the whole Iraqi people. Though Pravda omits comment, the report, like that of the arrest of Shuker, continues the unfavorable presentation of Iraqi internal developments to the Soviet public which has been observed for some time.

5. Latin America. The Soviets are taking steps to exploit what they obviously regard as favorable conditions in the aftermath of the Cuban crisis. At least three Latin American governments--Argentine, Mexico, and Uruguay--have been approached with a Soviet proposal for a large good-will mission to South America. The mission reportedly would be headed by Kosygin and include cultural performers and economic aid specialists.

The Brazilian Government delegation currently in Moscow has been received by Khrushchev who, in his published statement on the occasion, stressed that the establishment of diplomatic relations between Brazil and the USSR would be basic to an expansion of trade such as that proposed by the Brazilian delegation. However, the Brazilian delegation reportedly has decided to recommend against diplomatic relations and to propose instead that permanent trade missions be established.

Meanwhile, the Bolivian Senate delegation (see Weeka No. 18) was received by Brezhnev May 5.

Soviet press material on Latin America, particularly feature material on the exploited populations of such countries as Bolivia and Venezuela, has also been increased and emphasizes that Castro's example is steadily attracting greater support. Izvestiya on May 4 front-paged a commentary on the trend onn Latin America which contends that the surge of anti-American sentiment on Latin America is proof of the correctness of the Communist Parties declaration in Dec. 1960 that "the front of active struggle against imperialism has opened in Latin America."

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INTERNAL (OFFICIAL USE ONLY) [redacted]

6. Leadership: Party First Secretary N.S. Khrushchev's six-day trip to Armenia (May 5-10) dominated leadership news during the week to an extent that readers of Kommunist (which in the May issue finally published his July 16, 1960 speech to the Soviet intelligentsia) might reflect over Khrushchev's own references to the "cult of personality." (See below) It was the first time he had been in Armenia, and his schedule was crowded. Met at the airport with the traditional welcoming symbol of bread and salt, he "acquainted himself with Armenia's historic past," visited agricultural facilities, the Byurakon astrophysic observatory, the Sevan hydroelectric station, the Kirov synthetic rubber factory, met with representatives of Armenian colonies abroad attending the festivities and with delegate-representatives of the other 14 Union Republics and, of course, delivered the principal speech in Yerevan (May 6) in honor of the 40th anniversary of Soviet accession to power in Armenia. The speech was broadcast and published in Pravda of May 7. In it he glorified the Soviet nationality policy and contrasted "socialist freedom" which he claimed brought economic advance to Armenia with the backwardness on the other ("freedom") side of the border. Khrushchev's participation in the Georgian celebration (which had been expected) was definitely confirmed by his arrival in Tbilisi on May 11 which was announced by Moscow radio that same morning. His activities there should follow the above pattern.

During Khrushchev's absence from Moscow, press reports of the activities of other top leaders lent the impression that Presidium Member and First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, A. I. Mikoyan was left in charge. In this connection Embassy officers travelling in Frunze and Alma-Ata shortly after May Day report that in portrait series still displayed, Mikoyan's picture was prominently posted--enjoying the third and occasionally the second position of prestige.

No definite news during the week was issued concerning Presidium Member and CC Secretary F. R. Kozlov whose absence was noted on May 1. Kozlov's last prolonged absence was during last year: from the end of July to September 8.

Other presidium travellers during the week included N. G. Ignatov, recently appointed Chairman of the newly-formed USSR State Committee of (Agricultural) Procurement who went to Kiev (May 5) and Alma Ata (May 10) apparently engaged in organizational work in connection with getting that organ functioning monthly. Minister of Culture Ye. A. Furtseva was in France during the week attending the Cannes Film Festival and on May 10, nominal chief of state L.I.Brezhnev left for Prague as head of the CPSU delegation to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Czech party.

7. Khrushchev's Speech to Representatives of the Soviet Intelligentsia July 17, 1960. N. S. Khrushchev's remarks to representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia on July 16, 1960 occasionally referred to the press finally have been published in Kommunist No. 7 (May). As published, they provide some information on the role allotted by the communist leadership to art and literature in the building of the communist society. In his remarks Khrushchev states that "creative freedom" in the "Lenin sense of the word consists of moving

together with the people to create spiritual richness for the people in the interests of the people." According to him, in a socialist society the growth of literature and arts does not occur spontaneously along an anarchist course but along directions planned by the party -- supervised as an important composite part of the common task. Khrushchev rejects the bourgeous "slogan" of freedom. He refers to his meeting with the same group of intellectuals during a thunderstorm three years earlier at which he states the thunder and lightening did not come only from the heavens. However, in the ensuing years the First Secretary indicated that the party has been very satisfied and today gives good marks to the performance of the arts and literature. He attributes this improved record to the fact that "we in the Central Committee---and you in complete agreement in the understanding of our tasks and goals." He reminds the group that they have in their hands a sharp tool -- but since they were not children they could be permitted to use sharp tools.

Even though it caused enemies of the Soviet Government to rejoice, Khrushchev justifies exposure of the errors of the Stalin period and of the anti-party group as necessary to free the country of the illnesses and dangerous tendencies of the past during the "period of the cult of personality." He demanded absolute support of the party program from the "intellectuals" reminding them that "under our conditions we have all manner of means to correct those who err without resorting to extreme measures."

Khrushchev insists that the party does not wish to suppress criticism. Permissible criticism is that "criticism based on principle that instills spirit, energizes and actuates constructive activities of the masses."

Khrushchev's speech also contained some formulations which hark back to anti-dogmatist statements in 1960 (his own speech at the Rumanian Party Congress, for example), but which have been largely absent from Soviet media since the November 1960 Moscow meeting of Communist parties and wholly absent from Khrushchev's public statements since then. Citing the economic progress of Socialist countries as the most convincing proof of the creativeness of Marxism-Leninism, he states: "that is what some dogmatics ought to remember constantly who are fond of abstract theoretical quarrels. These quarrels are not worth a cent at times." He later comments: "The popular masses judge political parties not only by what ideas they proclaim, but mainly by how they put these ideas into practice. If our party occupied itself only in showing what good ideas it stands for, and did not ensure the transformation of the life of the people for the better on the basis of these ideas, the people would not follow us."

8. Top Party Shake-up in Kirgizia. A May 8-9 republic party plenum freed Kirgiz Party First Secretary I.R.Razzakov from his duties in that post and as a bureau member "in connection with transfer to other work" replacing him with T. Usubaliyev, who has been chairman of the Kirgiz Supreme Soviet. (Short summary of plenum in Pravda of May 11.) The wording of the announcement suggests that Razzakov, who received an Order of Lenin at the end of last year (Pravda, December 24), may successfully shift with Moscow's "wind of change" now sweeping some of the corruption out of the Central Asian republics.

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The plenum also elected M.A. Gavrilov a member of the republic party bureau and Central Committee second secretary. Former Second Secretary V.F. Stepkin, who had been criticized for inattention to agriculture (Sovetskaya Kirgizia, Feb. 9), was made to move down to "secretary." Apparently Gavrilov at best is a very recent addition to the Kirgiz Central Committee. He was not elected at the February 28, 1960 (the last) congress. A former candidate member of the Turkmenistan party, he was shifted about three years ago to the Moscow apparatus where he has been serving as a sector chief in the CC section on Party Organs for Union Republics. His assignment to Kirgizia clearly casts him in the role of Moscow watchdog and, perhaps, CPSU CC hatchetman for further dismissals. The plenum also dismissed K.D.Dikambayev (in disgrace) from membership in the republic party bureau. He was charged with providing inadequate leadership and tolerating serious deficiencies in the direction of Republic's economy. Kirgiz CC member B. Mambetov was elected a bureau member at the plenum so it may be that he has been chosen as new Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

Kirgizia, it will be remembered, was one of the first republics (in the current wave) known to have a top level corruption case. Minister of Internal Affairs M. Isayev was appointed to that post even after compromising information about him became known. Khrushchev brought up the matter in an exchange with Razzakov during the latter's speech at the January plenum. Razzakov admitted error, giving the impression that the matter would never have been mentioned openly if Khrushchev had not dragged it out of him. (Despatch No. 483 of January 17, 1961).

The republic press (when received by the Embassy) will probably provide more detail than the abbreviated Pravda account. It should clarify whether or not another wholesale house cleaning of government and party functionaries in Central Asia will gradually unfold.

The plenum also set the date for the republic's coming party congress: September 19, 1961.

9. Three Major Amendments to Soviet Law: The past week has seen three major amendments in Soviet law. One is an amendment to the USSR criminal statute (USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium decree of May 5) making three more offences punishable by death. Two RSFSR laws (RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium decrees of May 4 and 8) crack down on "anti-social" manifestations. Despatch 762 of May 9, 1961 and subsequent despatches report some details of the three laws.

In brief, the three crimes newly punishable by death which are added to the USSR criminal code are: (1) counterfeiting money or securities with the intention of passing the bogus paper, (2) misappropriation of public property on especially large scale, and (3) "especially dangerous" chronic criminals who terrorize prisoner reform areas or assault members of the administration or organize or participate in gangs for this purpose. The list of crimes to which a term of banishment can be added following the legal sentence has been extended and the period of banishment made more severe (from two to five years).

In writing about the May 4 anti-parasite law, the chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Court A.T.Rubichev calls it a "law of great significance." It permits expulsion to "removed locations" of persons deemed to be "parasitical elements." Crimes indicated as "parasitical" are defined so broadly that large numbers of persons could be included and justice could become quite arbitrary. Whether this will happen depends on how the law functions in practice. The "parasite" can be sentenced either by regular peoples' courts or comradely courts. Rubichev stresses the element of control. Before a case can be turned over to a "comradely court" all relevant materials pertaining to the case must be examined and transfer must have the sanction of the relevant prosecutor's office. If, following "trial", the "comradely court" imposes the sentence of banishment there is still one instance of appeal -- the relevent ispolkom executive council. With such procedures, in effect the "comradely court" is reduced to an organ executing the desires of the prosecutor's office. In this limited way the law seems to have been shaped by those who wish to channel public participation in justice along the lines of orthodox procedures, or, failing that at least be in a position to control public participation effectively.

Drunkenness, said to be one of the more common manifestations of the symptoms of anti-parasitic existence, is legislated against in the May 8 decree by stiffening the penalities for bootlegging, the making of stills and the possession of moonshine. Home brewing for personal consumption may now be punished by a $330 fine (300 new rubles) or deprivation of liberty for up to one year (formerly: 30 or up to three months). If the liquor is made for sale, the sentence imposed can include loss of liberty for from one to three years with or without the confiscation of personal property (formerly: loss of liberty for up to three years -- i.e. sentences of 6 months or less could be imposed).

MILITARY (UNCLASSIFIED)

10. Demobilized Military Personnel to the New Lands. A front-page article in Red Star (May 11) discusses a recent directive of the Ministry of Defense which provides procedures for funneling into the virgin lands and special projects of the seven-year plan, demobilized military personnel "who express a wish to work and live in those regions." Selection and processing of personnel answering the appeal for laborers in these areas will be handled by the Komsomol organization. Special emphasis is to be placed on the recruitment of qualified mechanics, tractor drivers, combine operators and chauffeurs. Personnel volunteering for jobs under this program are guaranteed all the normal rights and benefits of military dischargees. The honored status of such personnel is pointed up by the provision for their transportation to the locations of their new jobs "by passenger train."

The general tenor of the article indicates that the described procedures are intended to apply, not only to those personnel released as a result of

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the reduction in armed forces personnel strength, but to those released in the course of the annual call-up and discharge cycle as well.

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